

BEIJING TODAY

COMMERCE

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Beijing's most beautiful schools

Coffee houses aren't for everyone. If last week's suggestions for quiet reading and work locations didn't jibe with your tastes, consider this week's collection of college campuses.

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Female apps the trend even while monetization a mystery



By LYNNE WANG
Beijing Today Staff

2014 may go down in history as the year of the female-oriented mobile app.

The boom began earlier this year when popular science website Guokr released Yanjiusheng, an app named for its similar pronunciation to “study of birth” that helps women who are trying to conceive.

The app tracks basal body temperature and cervical mucus levels to predict the user’s next ovulation. It includes a built-in BBS and a platform to help users share information and seek advice from pregnancy consultants.

Since its launch, the app has been downloaded more than 200,000 times. More than 1,000 women credit it with helping them conceive.

“Traditional wisdom holds that birth and pregnancy just happen naturally. Most women don’t know what to look for or monitor if they are trying to become pregnant,” said Zhao Zheng, the product’s manager.

Since its founding in 2010, Guokr has grown to become China’s most influential science website. Like Douban, the site is an interest-based community in which users join groups and have themed discussions. Known for its balance of rationality and entertainment, Guokr has accumulated 460,000 users and it is visited more than 6 million times every month.

Those strong numbers helped it raise more than \$6 million in funding from several venture capitalists. But a growing user base has not translated into profits. Analysts say the company’s wooing of female smartphone users is new attempt at monetizing content.

“With the help of loyal users and original content, mobile applications may be the best way to make a profit,” said Yan Jun, an analyst at 163.com.

“The move also reflects the Guokr community,” said by Duan Qing, technology editor at 36Kr. “More than half of Guokr’s content is health-related and around 40 percent of its users are female. A women’s health app is a good business idea.”

Rise of women’s apps

Guokr’s pregnancy app is not the only mobile app targeting women.

Launched in 2010, Da Yima, named for its similar pronunciation to “Aunt Flo,” was the first period tracker in the Chinese market. Unlike Yanjiusheng, Da Yima provides more generic monitoring of the menstrual cycle.

After plugging in the dates of last period and the average days one’s period usually lasts, users will receive reminders about when to expect their next period. Da Yima has 30 million users, 4 million of whom are regulars according to EnfoDesk.

“In China, these topics are embarrassing and taboo. Women do need a tool to help them keep track of their monthly cycles and better understand their bodies,” said Wang Guanxiong, an Internet analyst.

“Period-tracking software also meets the users’ mental needs. It provides a safe platform to communicate with other women who are suffering from similar pain and frustration. An outlet like that can be a powerful mood booster,” Wang said.

If period apps deal with women’s problems on certain days of the month, female e-commerce platforms satisfy more persistent needs.

Meilishuo is an online shopping guide that doesn’t sell goods but provides recommendations for its users.

Released in 2009, the mobile app pushes out numerous pictures of matching clothes and fashion products scraped from third-party e-commerce sites like Taobao and

Tmall. Users get customized inspiration and purchase links. The built-in channel “Love Beauty” invites users to photograph and share images of garments and accessories they hope to buy.

Impressively, 8.74 million users log in to the app every month: more than 60 percent use it every week, and 10.3 percent check out their new recommendations twice a week according to mUser Tracker.

“The popularity of fashion e-commerce platforms reflects the desire and spending habits of Chinese women. Compared to males, young women tend to spend more money when shopping online – even if they earn less,” *The Wall Street Journal* said in an editorial. “The need to be praised makes them more likely to share and even flaunt themselves via community-orientated e-commerce apps.”

Helijia joined the battleground in March. It represents another type of female-oriented app: location-based cosmetic and beauty services.

The app consults numerous nail technicians online and allows users to schedule a manicure appointment via smartphones. Door-to-door nail care and related services are also available.

“Unlike traditional group-buying apps, we free loads of manicurists from nail salons and connect them directly with customers. It lets users can get beauty services in an efficient and economical way,” said by Meng Xing, founder of three Internet start-ups including Helijia.

Next step for female apps

The boom in female-oriented apps might herald a great future for the market.

According to CNNIC, the gender gap among Chinese netizens is quickly vanishing. Some 44.4 percent of all PC and mobile users are female.

In China, that gives female-oriented apps a potential market capacity of 270 million users.

“The advent of girlish apps and those which are exclusively designed for women highlights the importance of women in Internet business,” said by Fu Zhihua, director of Tencent’s cloud platform.

“As emerging IT consumers, women are guiding a revolution in business models from ‘rational and functionally-orientated’ towards ‘sensitive and experience-focused,’” Fu said.

But obstacles remain.

Rather than expanding the market, many newcomers are simply rehashing existing female-oriented app ideas.

The conflict between Da Yima and Meet You is a good example.

Since the launch of the two period trackers, comparisons between their user interfaces, target demographics and backing have hardly stopped. A recent PR battle between the two pushed their conflict to a new high.

“It seems odd for start-ups to spend so much money fighting each other. Focusing on competition and ignoring innovation will alienate many of their users,” said Li Donglou, an independent Internet analyst.

Monetization is another challenge for app developers – especially for entrepreneurs in the field of female-oriented software.

Many app makers are adding social features to retain their users. But thus far, those users are not bringing back any money.

“The combination of software and hardware is a new concept in the digital industry. For some of these female apps, integration with wearable technology might provide more accurate data related to body and health. It could pave the way for a saleable product that brings new features to existing apps,” Meng said.

Bonus point abuse forces China to reform PE

By LYNNE WANG
Beijing Today Staff

A group of candidates for the National College Entrance Exam in Benxi, Liaoning Province recently admitted to having faked their athletic achievements to win bonus points on the test.

The policy of awarding extra points to talented athletes began in 1986. As part of an effort to boost the value of physical education, weighted scores were designed to offer athletes the chance to enter colleges and to encourage average students to exercise.

But frequent scandals and rampant manipulation have many doubting the ongoing usefulness of this policy.

A school of supermen

The news that 87 of the 1,000 graduates at Benxi Senior High School had been awarded national-level athletic certificates raised eyebrows last month.

According to national policy, these certificates would guarantee students an additional 10 points on their entrance exam scores.

Investigators were quick to notice that the five largest cities in Liaoning Province together had only 89 such students. In addition, 25 of the students at Benxi were purportedly nationally-ranked competitive swimmers: an amazing feat in a school without a pool.

Media coverage traced many of the certificates back to the 2013 National School Cup Soccer Game.

According to education rules, the Top 8 of 12 teams nationwide can receive a state-level certificate. Although the team from Benxi Senior High School lost 11-2 to another school soccer team, its players were awarded certificates.

Investigators soon learnt the parents "bought" their children's certificates on the advice of the school.

During the first two years, Benxi Senior High School administrators stacked their teams according to students' scores and personal connections. One insider said it cost 40,000 yuan to purchase a place on the soccer team – an investment that the school guaranteed would result in a certificate.

The Disciplinary Department of Liaoning Province said it confirmed that Benxi Senior High School was involved in helping its students fake their athletic achievements. It has not elaborated on the details.

As a consequence, 66 of the 87 students voluntarily gave up their bonus points when asked to sign a letter guaranteeing their certificates were fairly earned.

Ubiquitous abuse

Benxi Senior High School is hardly alone.

As the investigation was getting underway, a whistleblower leaked news that Luohe Senior High School had 74 nationally ranked athletic students in a single grade, one of whom was the highest scoring student in the province.

If true, it would mean a single school accounted for 10 percent of the year's total athletic awards.

Like their counterparts at Benxi, most of the students from Luohe got their certificates from the 2013 Youth Traditional Wushu Championship held in Henan Province.

Several students have already come forward to give up their certificates.

In 2010, a group of 31 students were caught cheating during the Xiamen International Marathon. In order to qualify for state-level athletic certificates, the students hired professional athletes run on their behalf. The imposters wore two or more timekeeping chips to help students falsify their performances.

Earlier in the same year, a Sichuan Province graduate was revealed to have faked her impossibly fast perfor-



Manipulation and sale of bonus points is making Chinese higher education increasingly unequal.

CFP Photo

mance of 31 seconds on the women's 50-meter breaststroke – a time which broke that of Olympic champion Luo Xuejuan.

In 2006, *China Youth Daily* reported that 1,000 students in Hunan Province had faked their athletic achievements: a third of the 3,000 certificate holders failed to show up for their re-test.

Similarly, only 196 out of 616 students in Xi'an, Shanxi Province were "real" state-level athletes when they applied for their bonus points on the college entrance exam this year, according to a report by *Southern Weekly*.

"The bonus-point system still has value in terms of helping us find talented athletes. A unified admission score on the exams is unfair to those student who have exceptional abilities in arts and sports," said by Xiong Bingqi, vice president of 21st Century Education Institute.

"But these frequent scandals are a sign that the negative effects outweigh positives. The system is just aggravating educational injustice and doing nothing to give a leg up to athletes who really need it," Xiong said.

Indeed, all bonus-point systems are increasingly becoming the tool by which privileged families manipulate the entrance exams.

"The 10 or 20 extra points from an athletic certificate could dramatically alter the destiny of a student given China's competitive education environment. It's quite unfair for students from average backgrounds," said Chu Zhaohui, a researcher at the National Institute of Education Science.

"The root of the problem is that this current bonus-point system is managed by bureaucrats rather than education and sports insiders. Their lack of appreciation for sportsmanship and objective standards is behind much of this corruption," Chu said.

Worse yet, the reduction of sports to an exam booster is preventing many students from taking a real interest in physical exercise and forming lifelong healthy habits, said Zhang Lei, a PE teacher in Beijing.

"Scores are the only reason these students exercise

and compete. Few choose to study an athletics-related major due to the lack of related courses at Chinese universities," Zhang said.

How to continue PE reform

China's educators have long appealed for officials to phase out the sports bonus.

"Extra points can only aid education equality when they are awarded under direct supervision and total transparency. Anything less makes them a sham," said by Yin Fei, a professor from Nanjing Capital Normal University.

In 2010, policymakers attempted to limit the scope of the point system by requiring that bonus points only be awarded to students in excellent physical condition and who held certificates for popular sports. In addition to eight sports specified by the central government, local authorities could permit up to two more for student athletes to choose.

"Over the past few years, the amount of sports-related bonus points assigned has fallen from 70 to 17 at the rate of 76 percent. This year, eight provinces cancelled the policy of awarding extra points for student athletes," a spokesman for the Ministry of Education said.

Other educators say incorporating physical test scores into the exams themselves could be a more equitable approach to PE reform.

"If PE was an official subject on the exams, students would have a high incentive to improve their health. Parents and students would pay attention to their physical fitness and encourage participation in sports," said by Liu Bo, director of Sports Department at Tsinghua University.

"Although it would still leave the door open for score manipulation, at least it would be an effective solution for pointing Chinese PE courses in the right direction," said Lu Shaoming, a committee member at the Chinese Education Society who specializes middle school moral education.

The Ministry of Education is working on draft policy for PE reform that would make students' PE scores one of the standards considered by college administrators, said Wang Dengfeng, the head of physical and art education under the Ministry of Education.

The Big Chance explores the post-war German mindset

By **YANG XIN**
Beijing Today Staff

For many Germans who grew up in the postwar period, the nature of one's origins and allegiance was a major preoccupation.

Few exhibitions have succeeded in capturing that period's aesthetic and its obsession with loyalty and order like *The Big Chance*, a collection of photographs by Dieter M. Graf.

Graf discovered his love of photography when he first used it to support his poetic works. Since then, it has been his primary medium.

When his mother died in 2012, Graf embarked on a project to record images of his vacant childhood home in suburban Ludwigshafen am Rhein using a mobile phone.

"I chose the phone because it seemed a more suitable way to approach the items I grew up with," he said. "By using the phone, I was able to go into the narrowest spaces and take shots with my free hand. The limitations of the phone's camera created a slightly trashy aura in every shot."

In the fall of 2013, he spent two months in Beijing, as a poet for the Goethe-Institut's Stadtschreiber-residency program.

Dieter's collection is now on exhibition at Three Shadows Photography Art Centre by way of the Goethe Institute China.

The exhibition includes 40 images, a sound installation based on three poems created in cooperation with the composer Volker Staub and a catalog.

Named for the 1950s movie *The Big Chance*, Graf's exhibition deals with the echoes of postwar memory. The floral wallpaper and tidy household provide an echo space to re-examine childhood memories that have fallen into the pages of history, and a chance to discuss things that are often left unspoken.



Photos by Goethe Institute China



The Room for Reproduction



Graf's Mother



Live Scene in Graf's Home

The exhibition is a new phase for Graf, whose photos and poetry were arranged by Nina Zlonicky, an architect and curator of the exhibition.

As an architect, Zlonicky had no prior experience in curation. She designed the exhibition space from an architect's perspective and attempted to replicate scenes found in Graf's photographs.

"I feel happy to be able to present my home to an audience so far away, but this is a weak attempt," Graf said. "Digital photographs can never replace what was, and the same is true for art. Art speaks for itself and cannot be captured. You can see it here, but that doesn't mean it exists here."

Three Shadows Photography Art Centre

Where: 155 Caochangdi, Chaoyang District
When: 10 am - 6 pm, through September 17, closed Mondays
Cost: Free

Korea's modern art seen in monochrome

By **YANG XIN**
Beijing Today Staff

As part of its 2014 touring project, the Korean Cultural Center is presenting an exhibition of the latest trends in Korean modern art.

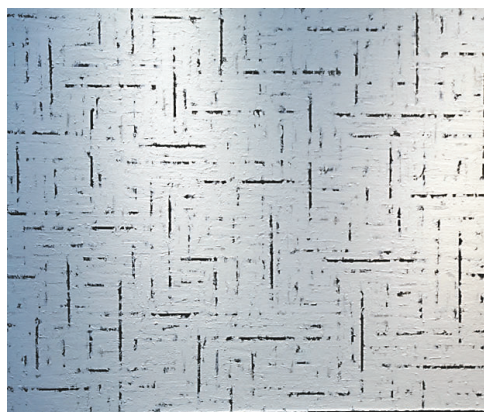
Titled *Empty and Full: Physical Property and Spirituality in Korean Modern Art*, the show made its Asian debut in Shanghai on June 27. It arrived in Beijing last Thursday.

Moon jars and monochrome designs are at the center of this year's artistic creations.

Viewers might find the pieces on exhibition similar to mainstream Korean art of the 1970s and to Western works which emphasize minimalism. In spite of the similarities, many innovations have been



A typical moon jar



Monochrome is the core of Korean modern art.

Photos by Korean Cultural Center, China

made in both the content and spiritual quality of Korean modern art.

Moon jars, a type of traditional Korean porcelain that serve as carrying vessels for

the artists' creations. By painting monochrome designs on the moon cylinders, both the painting and its carrier merge in a unified expression of art that can be interpreted as a unique artistic concept.

"When looking at Korean modern art, we can feel strongly that the pull of international-oriented design coexists with traditional elegance. It shows the culture and characteristics of Korea," said Wang Chunchen, a critic.

More information is available for visitors at kocenter.cn.

Korean Culture Center

Where: 1 Guanghuaxili, Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang District
When: August 21-September 15
Cost: Free

French and Chinese styles converge in Ex-model

By YANG XIN

Beijing Today Staff

An Internet mini-drama featuring a Chinese girl's dream-seeking adventure in Paris is the result of the latest Sino-French TV co-production according to the French Embassy in China.

Ex-Model, which began airing on April 1, depicts the life experiences of Xinxin after she is cheated in France and forced into the role of a drifter. Her dreams of becoming a supermodel in Paris are dashed when she is finally shut out of the fashion circle after seven years.

Faced with harsh reality, Xinxin works odd jobs to keep seeking her dreams.

Xinxin's life shows the fall of a "goddess" into the depths of failure. But the story is more one of her persistence and optimism than of good fortune lost.

Apart from its insightful plot, *Ex-Model* caters to most female viewers who are obsessed with exotic Parisian landscapes and the fast-paced life of glamour models.

Since its debut on Youku, China's largest video website, *Ex-Model* has received 100 percent positive feedback for its quality production and fascinating storyline. Critics have praised it as a shining exam-



Ex-Model has been a hit on Chinese Internet TV.

Photo from youku.com

ple of drama in the era of Internet TV.

In the upcoming second episode, Xinxin is expected to confront the challenges of her generation and decide whether to marry in France and become a forgotten housewife or to return to China

as a leftover woman.

While the first episode lifts the veil on Paris, a "city of romance" from a Chinese perspective, the second episode portrays a new China in foreign eyes.

Wang Xinyu, a Chinese-French model,

plays the lead role of Xinxin. As a supermodel herself, Wang's performance is another plus for the drama.

Despite many exaggerated appearances on the screen, her authenticity has won her many fans.

Exhibition gets inside the life of Gabo

By YANG XIN

Beijing Today Staff

Instituto Cervantes in Beijing is presenting a photography exhibition honoring Gabriel García Márquez, the recently deceased Colombian winner of the 1982 Nobel Prize in Literature during the run up to the Beijing International Book Festival.

Titled *Life of Gabo*, the exhibition is supported by the Colombian Embassy in China and showcases intimate family photos and popular moments in the prestigious author's life.

Mostly shot by his family and followers, the photos record different phases of Márquez's life and open a window to his inner world. Each photograph includes briefings in Chinese and Spanish.

Life of Gabo is meant to showcase the continuing importance of emerging technology in modern art and ways information and media influence modern innovation.

García Márquez, who began his career as a journalist, wrote many acclaimed non-fiction works and short stories. He is best known for his novels such as *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Love in the Time of Cholera*.

His works have achieved significant critical acclaim and widespread commercial success, most notably for popularizing a literary style labeled "magic realism", the fusion of magical elements and events in otherwise ordinary and realistic situations.

On his death this April, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos described Gabo as "the greatest Colombian who ever lived."

Life of Gabo

Where: Instituto Cervantes, A1 Gongti Nan Lu, Chaoyang District-

When: August 21-December 15

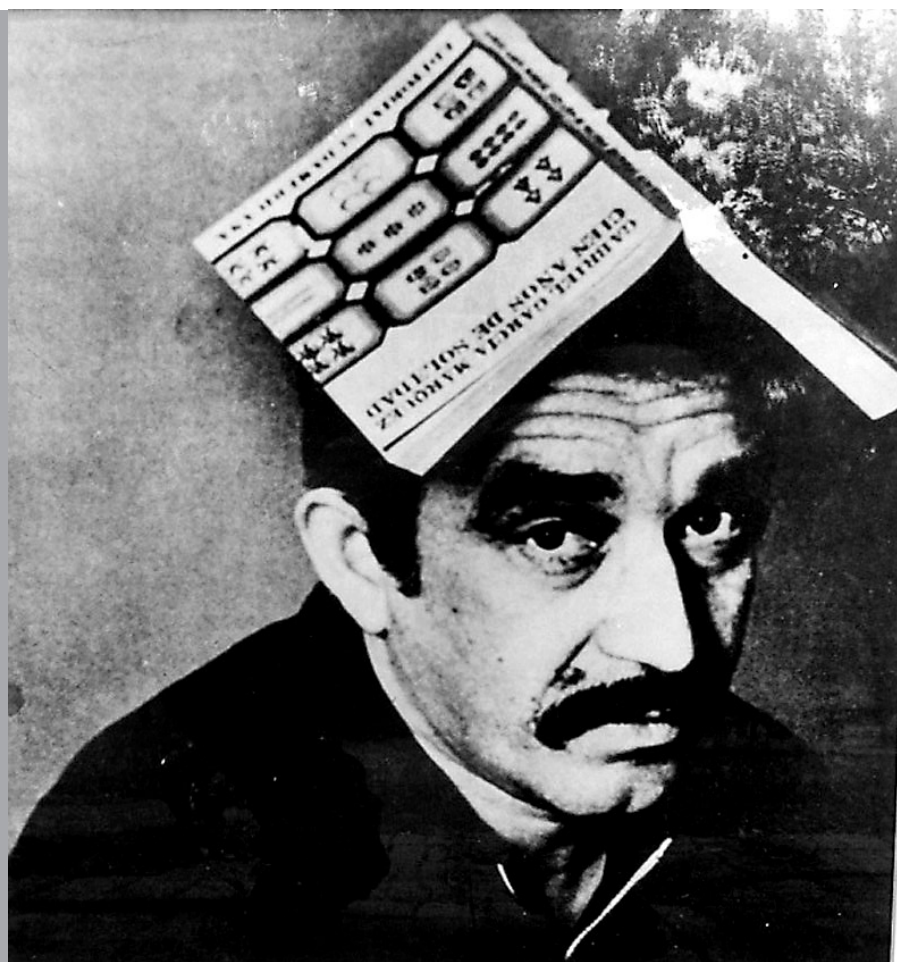


Photo provided by Instituto Cervantes

Quiet Retreats at Beijing's Famous Schools



Front gate of the former Fu Jen University

Former Fu Jen University

Long known as the most beautiful campus in Beijing, the former Fu Jen University was founded in the garden and stable of Beile Tao's Mansion.

Finding himself short on money after the collapse of Qing Dynasty, Beile Tao began renting out his garden to make a living.

In 1925, the Catholic Benedictine Order of the US leased the site to open Fu Jen University as an educational center that would combine Chinese and Western styles.

Fu Jen University paralleled the founding of Peking University, Tsinghua University and Yencheng University and was one of the capital's "Four Universities" in the early 20th century. The school drew such Chinese intellectuals as Hu Shi, Ji Xianlin and Zheng Zhenduo.

While the main structure is made of brick, stone, concrete and steel, Chinese elements are organically inserted throughout. The two-story building is clearly a symmetrical quadrangle with a three-storied turret at each corner. Designed to mimic the Forbidden City, the building gives the school a feeling of stability, elegance and dignity.

The roof is made in traditional palace style using green glazed tiles. Other Chinese architectural elements include the white marble foundation, carved window frames and stone lions by the main entrance.

The building is relatively young when compared with other famous structures in this historical city, however, its thick walls are very effective at blocking out noise.

The rear garden, covered corridor and pavilion combine to make the building one of the most nostalgic places in Beijing.

"Even though time is fleeting, you can hear birds singing and watch the flowers bloom. It's like traveling back in time to the Republican Era," wrote one visitor.

The school closed in 1952 when the Chinese government restructured the country's higher education system and merged it with

By **YANG XIN**

Beijing Today Staff

We understand that coffee shops are not for everyone.

Continuing last week's theme of quiet places to curl up with a good book, Beijing Today picked through the city's most charming college campuses to find quiet locations that promote concentration.



Panorama of CAFA



Antique building in the former Fu Jen University

CFP Photos



Artistic sculptures at CAFA

Beijing Normal University. It is currently used by Beijing Normal University as the campus for one of its secondary colleges.

Where: 1 Dingfu Jie, Xicheng District

Getting there: Take Bus 11 and get off at Liuhai Hutong. Walk along Dingfu Street

for about 500 meters or go off at Beihai Houmen and walk 800 meters north.

Tips: Try to use the rear door. It rarely has a security guard posted. Otherwise, you can try posing as a student and strolling through the front gate. If all else fails, lie to the guard about meeting someone.

Central Academy of Fine Arts

As the school every Chinese artist and art lover yearns to attend, the Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) has a rich atmosphere of romance and imagination.

It is said that the color gray is the most profound and eternal one in an artist's perspective. Maybe that's why the buildings in CAFA are all painted gray.

CAFA's campus is an elaborate collection of block buildings. Limited floor space did little to stunt the architect's imagination.

Walking through the east gate of CAFA is like walking through a century. After the school's relocation in 2001, the stone gate was preserved and continues to serve as guardian of the historic paradise of art.

Don't miss the teaching building. Many corridors, isles and halls in the building show off the works of students and professional artists.



Interior of the CAFA Art Museum

Unlike most school buildings with concrete structures, buildings in CAFA use glass walls and ceilings. The distinctive design allows more light into the interior and inspires the imagination.

The campus Art Museum is a major landmark of CAFA. While Beijing's streets are commonly seen as a chessboard-like net, the Art Museum breaks from linear routine to present its works as a three-dimensional curved body.

Where: 8 Huajiadinan Street, Chaoyang District

Getting there: Take Buses 420, 614, 707 or Express 104 and 103 and get off at Hua-jiadi Beili.

Tips:

- If you are stopped by a security guard at the front gate, tell him you are there to visit an exhibition at the campus Art Museum.
- Try to remember what the campus' panorama looks like or you might find yourself wandering forever between unmarked buildings.

Nightlife

Beijing Sonic Electronic Music & Art Festival

From September 5 to 14, the two-week electronic music and art festival Beijing Sonic is organizing six parties and live shows, five creative workshops, three visual art exhibitions, four documentary screenings about electronic music culture and 60 performances by electronic musicians and visual artists.

Musical acts include Antigone and Elliott Litrowski from Paris's legendary label "Concrete," Wrecka Spinazz Club and Nick V from Paris; Prosumer from Ost Gut Ton and electronic band Wareika from Berlin; and local electronic musicians such as Yang Bing, Mickey Zhang, Dead J, White+, Zhiqi and Suki. Scheduled workshops include the Electronic Music Equipment Forum, a Record Company Exhibition and Interview,



Street Art: Paris vs Beijing, Tattoo Art: From Paris to Beijing and a Vogue Ball Workshop.

Documentaries scheduled for screening include *Paris is Burning*, *Real Scene Paris*, *Pump Up the Volume* and *Real Scene Berlin*.

Beijing Sonic is inviting artists from Berlin, Paris and Beijing to place their diverse art at venues and dance centers with new media installations, light shows and visual art performances.

Where: Ming Space, B86-A-3, B1, Oriental Plaza, Dongcheng District

When: 4 pm-6 am, September 5-14

Price: Day Ticket 150 yuan (presale 100 yuan); Week Ticket 450 yuan (presale 260 yuan); Two-Week Ticket 900 yuan (presale 480 yuan)

Music

A journey of Greek music

The Hellenic Sino Band is bringing more than five hours of hit songs to immerse listeners in the best of energetic, Greek music.

The band's name is a combination of the Chinese character for heart and the Greek word adein, which means singing.

Put together, these words mean "Singing from the Heart." The group enjoys bringing people from different cultures together and sharing their passion for Greek music.



The Band: Nicolas Dima-kopoulos on vocals, guitar, laouto, bouzouki and oud; Anna Avdeeva on drums, acoustic guitar and backing vocals; Liu Yang on piano, keyboards and backing vocals; Nick Topalidis on drums and percussion; and Bob on bass.

Where: VA Bar, 13, Wudaoying Hutong, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm-2am, August 29
Tel: 5844 3638

Kenny G

World-famous soprano sax player Kenny G is holding a concert at the Beijing Exhibition Theater on September 5.

Kenneth Bruce Gorelick, better known by his stage name Kenny G, is an American adult contemporary and smooth jazz saxophonist. He is famous for his popular songs "Going Home," "Songbird" and the Chinese classic "Jasmine Flower."

His fourth album *Duotones* brought him breakthrough success in 1986. Kenny G is the top-selling instrumental musician of the modern era with global sales totaling more than 75 million records. He has won the Grammy



Award for Best Instrumental Composition, the American Music Awards and the Soul Train Awards.

Known for his circular breathing, long hair and silky smooth jazz stylings, Kenny G is the most famous soprano saxophonist. He holds the Guinness World Record for longest sax performance, having played melodies in F major for 45 minutes and 47 seconds.

Where: Beijing Exhibition Theater, Xizhimen Wai Dajie, Xicheng District
Tel: 6835 4455

When: 8pm-midnight, September 5
Price: 180-1,080 yuan

Dining

Over the Moon

The Peninsula Beijing proudly presents its legendary, gourmet mooncakes to satisfy Beijing's epicureans. Guests can find these delectable treats at Huang Ting, the Lobby Lounge and at the Peninsula Boutique in Jing Restaurant.

The highly coveted Peninsula mooncakes were created in Hong Kong by Chef Yip Wing Wah using a closely guarded, secret recipe. Chef Yip and the team at The Peninsula Hong Kong produce more than half a million of the renowned pastries by hand each year. Most sell out within a day.



Where: Huang Ting, B2/F, The Peninsula Beijing, 8 Jinyu Hutong, Wangfujing Jie, Dongcheng District
When: 10 am-10 pm, through September
Tel: 8516 2888 ext. 6707

Culture

City of Segregation: The story of the Manchus

Did you know that Beijing was once a deeply segregated city? People from the south side could not freely marry people from the north. The segregation laws remained in effect until 1902.

The Qing Dynasty was a time of occupation for Beijing. The Manchus came from China's northeast to conquer and occupy the country. Upon their arrival, the Manchus implemented a strict segregation policy designed to keep them in power.

The area around the Forbidden City was reserved for members of the imperial clan and soldiers of the eight-banner army. Chinese civilians were only permitted to live on the south side of town. Both laws and walls kept these two societies rigidly divided.

City of Segregation is the story of how the Manchu's impressively managed to occupy China for almost 280 years, how they changed the city and how strongly they shaped our notions of "Old Beijing" today.

More similar to Mongolians than Han Chinese, the Manchus had very different



practices than the majority of the citizens they commanded. They saw horsemanship and the ability to shoot a bow as essential to preserve the Manchu way of life, and Manchu women did not bind their feet like Han women.

Despite their best efforts, these nomadic virtues proved difficult to preserve in the urban maze of Qing era Beijing.

Where: The Hutong, 1 Jiudaowan Zhongxiang Hutong, Dongcheng District

When: 3 pm-midnight, August 30

Price: 100 yuan

Email: info@the-hutong.com

Web: thehutong.com

Art

Wolves Troupe brings physical theater to Beijing Youth Theatre Festival

Physical theatre is a performance art that pursues storytelling through motion and gestures. Several performance traditions all describe themselves as "physical theatre," but they share a common focus on the motions of performers rather than scripted dialogue.

Wolves Troupe is one of the top acting troupes in France. Its actors combine classic circus routines into their physical theatre performances and challenge the limits of the human body in their interaction with the audience.

This is the first time that The North, the masterwork of Wolves Troupe, has come to China. It represents the top tier of modern French circus.



Where: National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA), 2 Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: 7:30-9:30 pm, September 2 and 3

Price: 120/180/240 yuan

Tel: 400-610-3721

Email: ponypiao@damai.cn

Web: en.damai.cn/event/tickets_71019/

Fifth International Light Festival brings light art to Beijing



Ink, Bamboo and Water Shadow, by Liu Xiaosong and Liu Huimian

By SHU PENGQIAN
Beijing Today Intern

The fifth international light festival Creativity Lights in Beijing opened at LD Design Center on August 20.

Through October 20, more than 20 light installations created by Chinese and international artists will be on display. Their unique works, which blend colorful light with cold architecture, reveal the charming power of light to bring concrete structures to life.

Only a few of the works were open at the opening ceremony. Organizers said the remaining light installations will soon be completed and open to the public.

"Worriless," one of the pieces shown at the opening ceremony, is the result of many designers' combined efforts. The display is made of countless pieces of white canvas. The shifting, colored lights project various shadows on the wall.

The installation's designers liken it to changes in a person's life: everyone is a white canvas, shuttling between sorrow and joy in a haste and remaining silent when faced with gloom and worry. By broadening our world and enlarging our ego, we can become more like that white canvas: always pure, but with much more interesting experiences, they said.

The other interesting installation "Follow" was created by designer Luo Wei. To represent the unconscious mind's desire to follow the crowds, she chose to use light to create a lizard design. Some "lizards" shaped by her cold light walk on the surface of an old brick wall while others crawling on the ceiling.

Another work, "Bamboo & Shadow," possesses many classic Chinese features. Its designers Liu Xiaosong and Liu Huimin were inspired by bamboo, Chinese ink and old shadow puppets. They combined the three elements with modern science and technology to give the three a new life in light.

Liu Xiao, one of the Top 10 violinists as ranked by CCTV, will be performing at the festival to accompany the artistic displays.

Creativity Lights in Beijing is one of the main exhibits of Beijing International Design Week. As one of organizers, LDDC has held four international light festivals with the support of the government since 2010.



In and Out, by Zhu Liye



Memories, by Ye Dewei



Time Light, by Zhang Ruimian, Zhao Hui and Liu Huimian



Worriless, by Tan Yuehui, Wang Huan, Zhang Yanliang and Wu Jiaying



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